

FACT SHEET

Wildland Fire Use Fire



Wildland Fire Use is the management of naturally-ignited wildland fires to accomplish specific pre-stated resource management objectives in predefined geographic areas outlined in Fire Management Plans.

Skates Fire Public Safety Message:

New Mexico Department of Transportation and the Gila National Forest will close State Highway 15 between the intersection of Signal Peak and New Mexico State Highway 35 near mile markers 14 and 25. Approximately 9 miles of road will be closed, depending upon the fire activity. This temporary highway closure will be in effect throughout the week of June 12, as firefighters continue burn out operations along the road. This is a public and firefighter safety measure.

UPDATE: June 13, 2006

CURRENT SIZE: 4,733 acres

FIRE NAME: SKATES FIRE

LOCATION: 7 miles northeast of Pinos Altos near the Continental Divide

DATE OF DETECTION: June 2, 2006

JURISDICTION: Gila National Forest

CAUSE: Lightning

STATUS: Crews have been conducting burnout operations as part of the appropriate management strategy. This results in an increase in smoke that is visible from Silver City, Mimbres Valley and surrounding areas. It is expected that during late evening and early morning, smoke from this fire will settle into the drainages and may affect low lying areas. As hot, dry weather continues, the fire will continue to grow and smoke will be visible from Silver City area communities.

RESOURCE BENEFITS: The fire reduces heavy fuel accumulations caused by years of fire exclusion. Reducing fuels minimizes the potential for large, intense fires in the future. A key biological benefit is that fire cycles nutrients back into the soil which is beneficial for a healthy and dynamic ecosystem.

FUELS: Fuels in the area are a mix of piñon-juniper and ponderosa pine.

CLOSURES: An emergency closure order is in effect for the immediate area of the Skates Fire. **A road closure is in effect-see above public safety message.** For specific information related to the closure order, please visit www.fs.fed.us/r3/gila.

SIGNIFICANT CHANGES: Fire spread and smoke will continue to become more visible as fire activity increases and warmer, drier weather persists.

RESOURCES: Two hundred sixty nine people are assigned to the fire. The Southwest Area Fire Use Team is assisting the Gila National Forest in managing the fire

FIRE INFORMATION: For specific information about the Skates Fire, call (505) 388-8268

###